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The analysis advances various notions concerning ways in which the cultural variable might ultimately affect vocational decisions. The problem is viewed cross-culturally. To understand vocational development, one needs to consider (a) how a man attains his identity in a given culture, (b) how vocational development is influenced by institutional forces, and (c) how cultural changes produce correlated change in vocational development. The basic assumptions are: (a) culture provides a context in which the individual validates his vocational-self; (b) cultural contexts comprise a variety of intitutional forces, each one influencing vocational development to some degree; and (c) cultural forces change with respect to urbanization and industrialization, with consequent changes taking place in the patterns and/or possibilities of an individual's vocational development. (Author)

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Cross Cultural Considerations in Understanding Vocational Development

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Sociologists and anthropologists (Benedict, 1960; Linton, 1945; Williams, 1960) recognize that each particular society builds a pattern of culture which differentiates it from others. It has been stated that within each society there is a unique philosophy about the place of the individual in that society (Kunde, 1959). There are relatively standardized ways in which culture prescribes what must be done, ought to be done, should be done, and may be done (Williams, 1960, p. 23).

The aim of this analysis is to advance various notions concerning the importance of the cultural variable, the possible cultural factors involved, and some ways in which these forces might ultimately effect vocational decisions. An attempt will be made to view these problems cross-culturally.

Few exacting studies have been attempted in this field. For this reason the ideas presented here are largely heuristic, and represent a variety of source material from the fields of psychology, psychiatry, sociology, anthropology, economics, education and an ongoing research project at Michigan State University.[1]

Propositions

The general proposition of this article is that culture is an important variable in understanding vocational development. More specifically: in order to understand vocational development one needs to consider (a) how a man attains his identity in a given culture; (b) how vocational development is influenced by institutional forces; and (c) how cultural changes produce correlative changes in vocational development.

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[1] An eleven-nation study concerning attitudes toward education and disability is nearing completion. Further information may be obtained from the second author.

Basic Assumptions

These propositions rest on several basic assumptions: (I) Culture provides a context in which the individual validates his vocational-self. (II) Cultural-contexts comprise a variety of institutional forces; each one influencing to some degree vocational development. (III) Cultural forces change in time and place with respect to urbanization and industrialization with consequent changes taking place in individual vocational development.

Assumption I: Culture provides a context in which the individual validates a vocational-self.

Individual experience develops in constant reference to one's environment. The human organism is not a self-contained unit. Man is born in space and time. He is reared in a field of human relations. Man is posited in nature; he is involved in laws of cause and effect. He is located in a world of subtle intimations and emotions (Boulding, 1961).

It has been suggested that no one has identity apart from society, and no one has individuality apart from identity (Foote, 1951, p. 21). It would seem that the development of a vocational self, or personal identity, is largely a result of the reciprocal interaction between the human organism and its environment (Wittkower, 1957, p. 250).

Linton (1945, p. 10) provides some important concepts for this first major assumption. He declares that innate potentialities only set ultimate limits to the forms which behavior can assume; they leave an exceedingly wide range of form possibilities. He states that the varied forms of behavior (and we might add, vocational behavior) can never be explained in terms of motivating needs alone. These biological and psychological needs are but initiating forces. Their role is strictly that of first causes. Linton is convinced that needs are forces whose expression is shaped by a multitude

of environmental and experimental factors. Need satisfying behavior will be organized in constant reference to the milieu in which the individual has to operate. This is in agreement with Useem's (1962) summation that self-validation is a cultural phenomenon.

These views have definite implications for the development of an adequate vocational theory. They raise certain old questions: Do people choose jobs or do jobs choose people (Olshansky, 1950)? Is vocational development a matter of chance or choice (Sinick, 1953, p. 542)?

The inclusion of the cultural variable in vocational research is to recognize that external as well as internal forces affect occupational choice. It diminishes the idea of an isolated and independent person whose vocational choices are solely affected in terms of individual needs, capacities, and concepts. It demands that we give equal recognition and attention to these external forces which appear to significantly influence vocational decisions.

Assumption II: <u>The cultural context consists of a variety of forces; each influencing, to some degree vocational development</u>.

The cultural context has two important classes of variables; natural and human (Linton, 1945, p. 11). There are forces in nature and in human relationships that contribute strong influences in vocational determinations.

<u>Natural factors</u> might be temperature, terrain, etc., which set limitations on available resources for the occupational structure of a given society (Beilin, 1953). The Dobu Island and the Trobriand Islands, off the southern shore of eastern New Guinea, illustrate the impact of nature on occupational and vocational development. The Dobuans and the Trobriands live in close proximity but are people of different environment and temperament.

The Trobriands are fertile low-lying islands which "provide an easy and bountiful living. The soil is rich and the quiet lagoons full of fish. The Dobuan Islands, on the other hand, are rocky volcanic upcroppings that harbour only pockets of soil and allow little fishing. Population presses hard upon the possible resources. The Trobriands' dense population lives at ease in large, closely set communities. The Dobuans are known to all the white recruiters as easy marks in the area. Risking humger at home, they sign up readily for indentured labour" (Benedict, 1960, p. 121).

The assumption here implies that opportunities actually available in a given geographical location will be realistic determinents of job choices. Kitson was quoted as saying during the early years of vocational research that, "longitudinal studies of occupational choice might disclose that the most important factors leading one to enter a certain occupation are not psychological at all, but such common place things as the nature of jobs available in the community " (Beilin, 1953, p. 455).

These natural forces have certainly placed limitations on vocational development. The questions to be considered are: to what degree is this natural environment influential in vocational choice; how does it relate to other variables, such as human factors? There is some reason to believe that societies which learn to control nature tend to diminish chance factors in both its human environment as well as the natural environment. In other words, it seems that natural chance factors become less significant as human-cultural patterns become more sophisticated.

Between the natural environment and the individual is interposed a significant <u>human environment</u> (Linton, 1945, p. 11). Within this configuration is found one's parents, peers, significant others, social class,

ethnic group, and cultural heritage. These various factors bring pressure, affecting both the level and direction of vocational development (Holland, 1959, p. 41).

Culture, per se, is a pattern or style of life. Cultural patterns of life imply regulations of human behavior which are experienced by each individual. Each culture assigns certain divisions of labor in relation to age, sex, birth, marriage, etc.

No society is so complex or so simple that it does not distinguish at least between men's and women's work. In our own culture, e. g., most plumbers are adult males and nearly all stenographers are women (Linton, 1945, p. 64). Among the Dakota tribes of American Indians it was the women's task to dress skins and do fine bead work. The men were assigned to hunting, fishing, and making war (Benedict, 1960, p. 299).

Much has been written about the values, attitudes, and behavior patterns of the Latin American female. The strong adherence of the Latin American male to machismo is inferred to have necessary status and occupational implications for the female. However, the work of Jordan (1964a, 1964b) and a number of his students (Cessna, 1967; Dean, 1967; Dickie, 1967; Felty, 1964 1965; Friesen, 1966; Kreider 1967; Mader, 1967) question this. They postulate that the values, attitudes, and behavior patterns of the woman become directionally similar to the man as their occupational roles become similar.

Most cultures have definite restrictions in regard to age and work assignments. Benedict declares that the puberty rites among primitive cultures are institutional means of introducing youth into the adult world of work. "In the interior of British Columbia, adolescent rites are a magical training for all occupations" (Benedict, 1960, p. 37). In modern societies such age-sets are also regarded; there are laws regulating the types and amounts of work an individual may do, relative to his age.

Cultures range on a continuum. There are primitive, traditional, and modern mass societies. The more primitive the culture, the fewer the modalities of life within that culture. The more modern the culture, the greater the number and complexity of the life styles (Useem, 1962).

In the primitive Kiowa culture (Marriott, 1945) there was but one homogeneous modality of life. The whole economy of this culture rested on the food, clothing, fuel, etc., taken from the buffalo. There was a high integration of the vocational-self around this one social modality: the hunt (Useem, 1962).

Moving into the more traditional culture of India, one finds a greater number of vocational life-styles. In one village, Deoli (Carstairs, 1958, p. 22), there were thirty-six caste-communities. Each group was integrated into its own religious and economic life. In each caste there was but one distinct occupation which was passed from father to son. Mobility from a lower caste to a higher caste was virtually impossible.

In primitive and traditional cultures one's style of life and status level is more or less determined at birth. If one is born in a primitive culture, only one general modality of vocational life is available. In traditional cultures, there are many existing modalities of vocational life, but one is, by virtue of birth, largely confined to his own family occupation.

The modern mass culture provides an infinite number of modalities or life-styles. It is a heterogeneous society with much mobility from one modality to another. In the complex American culture there is a loose and confusing integration of the vocational-self in terms of ultimate choices and adjustment (Wheelis, 1958).

In modern mass cociety there are a bewildering variety of social worlds and each has an organized outlook on life. Status levels are

important in relation to vocational choice. Prestige roles in each modality are theoretically open to the perceptions, evaluations, and aspirations of every other modal group. "A recurring theme in American society emphasizes the wide-spread acceptance of the 'success imperative.' Upward social mobility is not only a possibility but something actually to be sought" (Synes, 1956, p. 212). Choice of one's occupation is more significant in a modern society. Therefore, forces in one's own social group which affect one's perceptions, evaluations and aspirations in regard to occupational roles will become important variables in determining ultimate vocational development.

Many studies have been made to determine the relationships of certain social status variables with values, aspirations, and expectations towards individual occupational goals. Such variables as family ideologies (Gold, 1958; Rose, 1957), racial differences (Singer, 1956, Strodtbeck, 1957), socio-economic factors (Schwarzweller, 1960), and educational factors (Strodtbeck, 1957) have been considered.

It would take another article to review the importance of social class elements in relation to vocational development in our own society. There are three generalizations which have been made concerning much of the research in this area: (a) there is some tendency for men to "inherit" the occupational status levels of their fathers, (b) people are strongly influenced by the advice of significant others when they select jobs and choose occupational levels, and (c) the general values which people hold are systematically related to their aspirational levels and the kinds of occupations they choose (Simpson, 1960, p. 264). It was noted, however, that most of the research has certain limitations; most population norms were selected from students rather than actual career workers; and ther is a notable lack

of studies of the inter-relationships of these various social variables.

Assumption III: Cultural forces change in time and place, with respect to urbanization and industrialization; this produces correlating changes in individual vocational development.

It is assumed that evolution or growth has been intrinsic to culture (Wheelis, 1958, p. 72), and that character cannot realistically remain fixed while conditions of the environmental life change (Boulding, 1961, p. 71). If this is true, as culture changes, an evolution in the prevailing character of vocational development should be expected.

This assumption would seem to be in agreement with Rostow's (1960) thesis of economic growth. He suggests that societies evolve economically; that they move horizontally through five distinct stages. Movement is along a broad continuum, from primitive-traditional cultures toward modern mass consumption cultures. Corresponding to this movement is a marked increase in vocational opportunity.

A number of concepts can be effectively employed in this problem area. Two of the most important are the concepts of the instrumental process and the institutional process. These are distinct human modes of action with which men deal with life. The instrumental refers to the use of tools-technology, and institutional refers to the creation of myths-supernatural (Wheelis, 1958).

It is assumed here that culture changes in direct relation to the use of tools or technology. As culture changes, there will be corresponding changes in personal and vocational character. Wheelis declares: "The immediate causes of the characterological change are to be found in the secondary effects of technological change: the loss of eternal verities and the fixed order, the weakening of traditions and institutions, the shifting values, the altered patterns of personal relationships. These changes directly

mold character, and these changes occur with a continuity that is traceable to the continuity of the instrumental process" (Wheelis, 1958, p. 82).

A cross-cultural view of three society types will amplify the above assumption. The primitive Kiowa culture (Marriott, 1945) placed much emphasis on supernatural or institutional modes of action. A man relied entirely on supernatural power when attempting to gain personal identity. Each man sought his power or style of life alone. He searched for a guardian spirit in lonely introspection. If he obtained power or identity, it was a supernatural gift. He had no "right" to it; nor was it intrinsically his. One had to look for it; to be open to it. In the Kiowa culture this self identity had primacy over the social identity. Every man knew who he was before he took his place in the life of his culture. He did not gain a style of life by joining one of the men's societies.

In such a primitive society, the element of vocational choice was not involved. There was no place or function for significant others in relation to vocation. The Kiowa stood ultimately alone in a precarious universe. He had no technical means to control the elements so he relied heavily on supernatural or institutional modes in making adjustments.

We see distinct changes as we move along the cultural continuum to the traditional culture of India. Here there is still strong emphasis upon institutional modes of action, but an increased recognition of instrumental values. One's identity is still determined by supernatural forces but is expressed in human forms.

The Hindu does not need to validate himself, for he too knows who he is in regard to his family or caste (Carstairs, 1958). His vocation is still determined more by chance than choice, but there is an increased flexibility in this regard.

In India there is a growing emphasis on technical modes. With this increase has come a corresponding de-emphasis on traditional, institutional forms of action. This transition toward industrialization has caused a noted change in certainty with regard to student vocational identity.

Similar traditional cultures undergoing technical changes, discovered increased distortions among their populace in terms of vocational reality and vocational desire (Smith, 1960). Cultural transition among these traditional groups appear to produce much frustration and varying degrees of apathy (Armstrong, 1959, Ross; 1957) in terms of career outlook.

In modern American culture, there is an increased complexity in terms of self-identity, cultural influences on vocational development, and availability of occupational choices. There are still large pockets of our society that emphasize the supernatural or institutional modes of adjusting to life.

For individuals in these pockets, the identification of vocational self is in terms of one's "calling" or in terms of one's family traditions. These appear to be declining in relation to the growing instrumental modes (Wheelis, 1958). Americans under pressures of rapid changes in urbanization and industrialization are seeking adjustment in relation to instrumental modes.

The modern citizen in the Western world is less sure of his identity than his counterpart in primitive and traditional societies. He is constantly seeking guidance or approval from his peers. His status, in relation to significant others, is growing in importance, in terms of vocational choices (Grunes, 1956). In our culture, a man's social identity has primacy over his self-identity (Useem, 1962).

Wheelis makes an observation relating to the importance of cultural

and personal variables in vocational development. He says: "scientific progress (instrumental) takes place and the area of the known is extended. It is extended slowly in those fields where institutional pressure opposes each scientific advance; it is extended with accelerating velocity in those areas which are free of such opposing pressures. But awareness of the progress provides no present answer, and some problems will not wait. One must choose and act. In such circumstances, decisions are apt to be made by reference to institutional values. One prays, consults dogma or refers --perhaps unwittingly--to mores. In psychological terms, the ego abandons the conflict and appeals to the superego for a verdict" (1958, p. 184).

Implications

Vocational theory must account for the importance of the cultural variable from a cross-cultural point of view. It appears that cultural factors are necessary but not sufficient to affect most vocational decisions.

To avoid the fallacies of both biological (the person impelled from within), and of cultural determinism (the person driven from without), the concept of identification in relation to a changing situation appears to from a sound basis for a theory of vocational motivation (Foote, 1951; Wheelis, 1958).

The research of Jordan and his students (see under Assumption II and footnote 1) is beginning to explicate the cultural variable. Data from the eleven nation study indicates that the male-female occupational role hierarchy is rapidly changing. The thesis is advanced that as societies acquire the scientific attitude and an "instrumental versus an ascriptive view of sex" that sex per se does not differentiate occupational role.

Useem (1966) in examining the role of sex in occupations suggests that it is time not only for a reassessment but perhaps a reassignment too. More

specifically she says: "In short, the crux of our problem--the dilemma between the men-women relationship and the man-woman relationship, the dilemma between the toughminded role and the tenderhearted role, both crucial to the survival of society--is how to mix and match them, separate and coalesce them.... We need to consider both the gender roles and the sexual roles, both the caring for specific individuals and the caring for categories of people....The issue at stake is how to make our human civilization into a humane civilization" (p. 17).

Jordan has also often observed that the cultural influences of the sub-cultural slum-inner-city areas of our own society are directionally and qualitatively similar to the influences of the Barriadas in Lima, Peru; the Callampas in Santiago, Chile; the Villas Miserias in Buenos Aires, Argentina; the Favelas in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; or the Turgurios in Guatemala City. This is actually the thesis of Oscar Lewis (1966) in his moving article "The Culture of Poverty." The awareness of this thesis should be further support for the federal "Job and Teacher Corps Programs." Perhaps the Revolution in Watts contained the same life-vocational precipatators as the revolutions in Guatemala, Peru, Bolivia, Haiti, or Cuba.

There are various implications arising from cultural considerations in regard to vocational counseling. If professional educators and vocational counselors are to assist young people to reach realistic vocational decisions, insight must be reached in regard to the cultural influences on the counselee (Danskin, 1957).

Each person seeking counseling comes from a cultural point of reference. This identity reference may be static, stable, or dynamic. There will be little vocational counseling needed with those in more stable traditional societal groups, and practically none for those in static primitive cultures. The stable identity groups will tend to hold different expectations of counseling than other dynamic groups. Authoritarian patterns will

prevail. In fact vocational guidance in traditional Belgium, as in most European (Reuchlin, 1964) countries, is entirely different in regard to "theory; practice, and cultural factors" (Ostlund, 1957). Hereditary determination is affirmed. Classifications of persons is made on the basis of social types. Participation of the counselee is at a minimum, with the counselor assuming dominance. In traditional societies there will be a tendency to channel persons into a vocational career at an earlier age, and this will be done with an air of finality. These concepts will probably also be held by traditional, stable groups within our own culture.

In dynamic modern societies, where the framework of life is less stable, vocational identity will be harder to achieve and maintain (Wrenn, 1962). The thought of finding a proper vocational identity is bewildering and confusing. The period of vocational uncommitment will tend to be extended. Early choices will be more tentative (Ross, 1957). The further we move from regular or stable patterns, the less certain we are of the consequences of vocational choice. Long-term goals seem progressively less feasible to the client (Boulding, 1961, p. 86).

Finally, the counselor needs to be aware of his own acculturation. He must be sensitive and appreciative of his clients' cultural identities (Reeves, 1957), especially in terms of those cultural patterns in flux of an emerging nature.

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Abstract

The analysis advances various notions concerning ways in which the cultural variable might ultimately affect vocational decisions. The problem is viewed cross-culturally. To understand vocational development one needs to consider (a) how a man attains his identity in a given culture, (b) how vocational development is influenced by institutional forces, and (c) how cultural changes produce correlated changes in vocational development. The basic assumptions are: (a) culture provides a context in which the individual validates his vocational-self, (b) cultural contexts comprise a variety of institutional forces; each one influencing to some degree vocational development, and (c) cultural forces change with respect to urbanization and industrailization with consequent changes taking place in the patterns and/or possibilities of an individual's vocational development.